Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Language, Philosophy and Culture. Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

The course addresses the Foundational Component Area in the following four ways.

This course (ENGL/MODL 222) will examine some of the major texts of world literature from the 1st through the 20th centuries. We will direct our attention around a core group of central ideas as they are developed in the texts, and we will investigate the evolution and transitions in the literary tradition. Some of the issues and questions we will examine in particular detail include: the relationship between reality and fiction; the question of the human condition and its relationship to history or a catastrophic event; the question of good and evil; and what constitutes human experience. Furthermore, we will take up these topics and themes in their own right, and as a basis for living in the contemporary world. This course will ultimately reveal how wider social forces shape the philosophical outlooks and aesthetic sensibilities of literatures from across the world, and ultimately, help students develop an appreciation for what the study of literatures from widely different societies and eras can teach us about ourselves and our shared humanity. Material from this course will include written texts and such visual representations as photographs, illustrations, films, or theatrical performances.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

Critical Thinking Skills (CTS): This course will enhance critical thinking skills through consistent reading and class discussion of key ideas in various literary traditions in world literature. The evaluation of critical thinking skills will be based on exams and class participation and may include written work. Exams will be designed to allow students to demonstrate their ability to evaluate and synthesize key ideas from the assigned reading. Class room discussion will focus on helping students better understand the nuances and complexities of literary works from around the world.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):
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Communication (CS): The course will enhance communication skills through small and large group discussion and may include writing about ideas, issues, questions, and themes central to course reading. The course will help students learn how to develop a greater understanding of texts from 17th century to the present that may involve guided writing assignments in which they will receive feedback, exams in which students will be expected to effectively convey key ideas from the course succinctly and clearly, and classroom discussion in which students will learn how to express questions and thoughts about the subtleties of each text under examination. Material from this course will include written texts and such visual representations as photographs, illustrations, films, or theatrical performances.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Social Responsibility (SR): The course will enhance social responsibility by providing students with a cross-cultural understanding of how history, region, and broader social forces have shaped the distinctive literary traditions from around the world. The evaluation of social responsibility will be based upon an end-of-the-semester short writing assignment in which students will be asked to reflect upon how their knowledge of literatures from previous historical periods and world cultures outside of their own has changed in light of the new information that they now possess. Students will be expected to demonstrate how key insights from the course have helped broaden their understanding of how history, culture, and philosophical outlooks have shaped the literary traditions of world literature.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making):

Personal Responsibility (PR): The course material throughout the semester will offer students an opportunity to reflect upon personal responsibility through such topics as the acceptance of the other, religious difference, questions of good and evil, duty to family, and the values of justice and freedom. Students will explore these topics through group discussion, writing assignments, and exams.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.